



HINGES & TONGS

ROCHESTER PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION, INC

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JAN.- FEB. 2000

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The success of your club's newsletter is dependent in part on what is submitted for publication. Please, if you have something to share send it to the editor. We are always looking for positive input, so why don't you drop me a line today!

Chapter Member 207-19273 of the American Philatelic Society

Chapter # 69 American First Day Cover Society

[Http://rpa.homepage.com/index.html](http://rpa.homepage.com/index.html)

Check out the RPA Home Page

Death of a Federation

The Niagara Frontier Federation of Stamp Clubs has decided to dissolve after more than 50 years in operation. The action was taken during a meeting in October, where a decision was made to split the \$300 treasury among the current members based on club size.

The group was especially active in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s. At least one federation show was hosted by Rochester during that time. Its last joint project was for a stamp collecting month mall promotional event last year.

Covering a region from Rochester in the east, to Hamilton, Ontario in the west, to Warren, PA in the south, the group was only one of two such federations left in upstate New York, leaving the Federation of Central New York Philatelic Societies as the sole surviving organization. Several

Niagara Federation clubs are applying for membership in the FCNYPSC.

Members of the 13 member Niagara Federation included: Buffalo Stamp Club, Checopex Stamp & Coin Club, Lockport Stamp & Coin Club, North Chataqua Philatelic Society, Olean Stamp Club, Plewacki Post Stamp Club, Rochester Philatelic Association, R.E. Fenton Philatelic Society, Warren County Stamp Club, Germany Philatelic Society, Hamilton (Ontario) Philatelic Society, Polish Philatelic Society, Senior-Pex Stamp Club

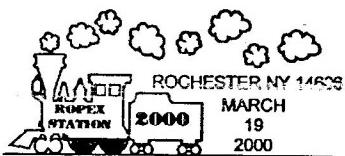
Win, Win, Win

Would you participate in a contest for philatelists where you could win \$2,000 in stamps and covers? It's easier than you think.

A short article in Linn's Stamp News of November 22 tells the details. Sponsored by Brookman/Barrett & Worthen, creators of the popular "Price Guide for United States, United Nations, and Canada Stamps and Postal Collectibles," the contest is a simple one. In 25 words or less, describe your selection as best 20th century stamp.

Judges for the event will be Robert Lamb (APS Executive Director), Michael Lawrence (Linn's editor/publisher), Joseph Saverese (ASDA Executive Vice President), Les Winick (Linn's columnist) and Betsy Towell (Director of the Postal History Foundation).

Entries must be sent to:
Brookman/Barrett & Worthen, 10 Chestnut Dr, Bedford, NH 03110 and postmarked by May 31, 2000.



**SEE YOU AT ROPEX
March 17-19, 2000**

We meet on the second and fourth Thursday of most months between September and June. Our headquarters are in St. Paul's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, on the corner of East Avenue and Vick Park B, across from the George Eastman House. A buy/sell/trade session runs from 7-7:45 PM, followed by the formal meeting at 7:45 PM. A silent auction concludes most evening's program.



Guest Columnist George M. Hill, 3rd, formerly a
PNC
(Part Four - Record Keeping)

For the formerly *Perpetual Novice Collector ... better known as an accumulator... getting my act together included the beginning steps of developing an interest in organizing accumulated philatelic material and narrowing the budding interest to that which can be accomplished. These elements of getting started were covered in previous portions of my story.

It became apparent from reviewing the "accumulation" that on several occasions "interesting" material was purchased more than once and duplication was seen soon to be a drain on financial resources. A formal inventory would be required that was both comprehensive and portable. Early on, the entire collection in album format could be taken to shows and "pieced-in" as philatelic material was presented by dealers or fellow "collectors". No need to tax your imagination. This method is not practical and it could jeopardize the security of valuable items taken to public places.

The choice then is to either develop a complete inventory in your own format or to use existing listings that can be modified to represent your collection. The easiest for beginners is to use published listings on which you place notes representing your

collection and those items that you will seek. Scott's catalogs contain much information that includes identification, some pictures, and values. While this method seems appropriate it should become apparent that if you collect a topical collection, carrying all the Scott's albums could become cumbersome. Further, your notes are contained in the current years' edition. What happens when the next edition comes out? Do you transfer your notes? While at first this seemed to be a "great" way to get started, and indeed it was, something more must be done and quickly before the upgrading task becomes insurmountable and interest wanes from the weight of record keeping.

Pen and paper or an electronic tabulation method needs to be employed. A first step could be to make copies of the existing catalog and then make copies of the updated material in a follow-on year. These then could be put in a loose-leaf notebook and the reference would extend the hand-annotated entries. Again, a cumbersome document is being developed. A collector could get several years out of this method. It soon will become apparent that something more practical needs to be developed.

The question is "Is all that has been done a wasted effort?" The answer is no. Through every-day use, what is needed to identify your collection was being formulated as your collection grew. The next step is a crucial one if the collection is a significant portion of your avocational life.

Next time the pros and cons of paper & pen and computerized record keeping will be discussed.

NOTICE

The RPA is attempting to put together a philatelic history of Rochester, Monroe county and north-western New York state. Anyone interested in sharing information on the above from their collections should contact Joe Doles. We are interested in local cancels, advertising covers, first days and any other items of postal history. We'll publish articles in H&T and eventually publish a local history booklet.

1999-2000 RPA Officers	
President-	Ed Kawasaki
Vice President-	John Kellas III
Treasurer-	Dave Roehrig
Corresponding Secretary -	Joe Doles
Recording Secretary -	Jim Piecuch
Immediate RPA Past President -	Tom Fortunato
Board of Governors	
Chuck Schultz (term expires June 30, 2000)	
Ray Stone (term expires June 30, 2001)	
Norman Wright (term expires June 30, 2002)	
Membership Chairperson-	Florence Wright

Preservation

by Arlene Sullivan, RPSC, BNAPS

wakarchuk@bc.sympatico.ca <mailto:wakarchuk@bc.sympatico.ca>

(Note- the author has a B.Sc. in biology from Simon Fraser University and recipes listed are proven effective and safe!)

It isn't only the moneyed collector of classic stamps and rare covers that needs to be concerned about the proper handling and storage of his collection. No matter what kind of philatelic material appeals to you, there are a couple of things that you can do to ensure that your stamps, postcards and souvenir sheets will last in good condition for many years.

I found a couple of books (check your local library) that provide good general overviews of how to look after paper artifacts. The first is "*An Ounce of Preservation - A Guide to the Care of Papers and Photographs*" by Craig A. Tuttle, Rainbow Books, Inc. ISBN 1-56825-021-5. This paperback is a nice introduction to care and preservation of your paper collectibles, not too technical but a useful overview of topics such as paper, inks, recognizing deterioration, how to store paper, and simple repair techniques.

The second is a much more technical book oriented toward the conservator of books, but it is worth a read particularly for those storing and displaying classic stamps. The information I give below on deacidification of paper comes from this volume. It is "*The Practical Guide to Book Repair and Conservation*" by Arthur W. Johnson. Published 1988 by Thames and Hudson, London, ISBN 0-500-01454-X. This is a good read for the chapters on Materials, Adhesives, and Chemicals alone.

Information on the chemistry of stamp "oxidation" and its reversal come from an excellent article in the first quarter 1998 issue of "BNA Topics", the journal of the British North American Philatelic Society. "*Rejuvenation of Stamp Colours with Hydrogen Peroxide*" written by L. Kruczynski is a very readable report on Mr. Kruczynski's investigations into some of the mechanisms of stamp discolouration and how to reverse them.

WHEN YOU BUY -

Mould and Mildew

Preservation should start from the moment you inspect potential purchases. Look closely - do you see any signs of staining, mould or water damage? Does the album or cover have a musty or sour smell? Is the paper damp, and is it fragile and easily torn? These are signs that the material may be contaminated with mould or mildew, and while it may be a really good buy, think twice about purchasing - you may be taking home more problems than the stuff is worth.

The main problem with albums and covers that carry fungal growths of this kind is that even with a good airing, a dry storage area, and careful handling, mould and mildew can spread to uncontaminated material in your collection and under the right circumstances can cause considerable damage. Fungal growth weakens paper, making it fragile and harder to handle, and can cause staining and colour changes in stamps and paper. Under conditions of dampness and sluggish air circulation - basement or attic storage, for instance - fungi can spread incredibly quickly and cause the loss of a collection in a matter of weeks. So avoid purchases that show the signs of mould and mildew contamination. If you must buy, make sure that your purchase is given a thorough airing in a dry place, and store it well away from the bulk of your collection. Always wash your hands after handling these kinds of pieces to prevent spread of the fungal spores to uncontaminated material.

Paper Condition

Especially if you are buying older material, carefully inspect the condition of the paper for pinholes, thin areas, and tears. Take a look at the colour of the stamp, too; is it faded or darkened? These are signs of paper deterioration that could have occurred for a number of reasons - usually improper storage. Exposure to sunlight, cigarette smoke, emissions from automobiles or coal plants, and even handling of the stamps with fingertips instead of stamp tongs can cause changes in the paper that weaken the bonds that hold the paper fibres together. Pin holes and tears can then occur with even gentle handling.

Exposure to even small amounts of acid from atmospheric pollutants or handling can cause "oxidation" of the stamp ink. Acidic compounds will also cause paper deterioration, so be aware that changes in ink colour can mean changes in paper quality, too. Orange inks of the Victorian period seem to be particularly susceptible to this kind of colour change - examples of the 3c small Queens of Canada, for example, can be almost black.

Special Cases

It also pays to know something about the printing and gumming of the stamps you are purchasing. For instance, "Ostropa" souvenir sheets issued in 1935 in Germany (Scott B68) are often found mint without gum. A gummed sheet in this case is not a very good buy as the gum was formulated with sulphuric acid which over the years has caused the paper of gummed sheets to deteriorate. Collectors who knew this soaked the gum off of their copies to preserve the paper, making the mint no gum sheets the preferred collectible. Know your stamps!

OK, MY STAMPS ARE HOME, NOW WHAT?

There are three simple rules to always remember when working with your collection:

1. Never use your hands to handle your stamps if you can use tongs.
2. Always use storage materials designed for use with philatelic material.
3. Don't smoke, eat, or drink around your stamps, or store them in areas where people are smoking, drinking, or eating.

Why tongs? Your hands may be clean, but even freshly washed hands carry traces of oils and acids given off naturally by your skin. Repeated handling of stamps with your fingers will leave residues on the stamps, and over time these will build up and cause paper deterioration and staining. The gum on mint stamps is also easily disturbed by finger tip pressure. Proper use of tongs prevents paper acidification and can save that valuable mint gum!

(This also applies to handling covers. While most modern material is never going to be worth enough to really worry about, old and/or valuable covers should always be handled with cotton gloves to avoid contamination with oils and acids.)

And why not store your stamps in baggies and old vinyl binders? While this may be the cheap way to go, watch out for inappropriate materials that may come into contact with your stamps and covers. The vinyl on binders, for instance, can give off chemicals used in the polymerization process - chemicals that even in small amounts can dissolve some kinds of inks, trash paper, and cause ink and gum transfers to the vinyl surface. A similar problem can arise with photocopied pages that may be in contact with your mounted stamps. Be careful with any kind of plastic or chemically treated material, including paper, that is not sold by a reputable dealer for philatelic purposes; the added expense of purchasing good quality storage bags and pages is very small compared to the loss of your collection by improper storage.

As for the third rule, no. I am not trying to nag you into not enjoying a smoke while you sort those colour varieties. Keep in mind, though, that cigarette smoke will discolour and damage paper eventually, and leave a smell that is impossible to get rid of. (Get a non-smoking friend to check your catalogues to see what I mean.) Try to limit exposing your collection to cigarette smoke and to any other kind of atmospheric pollutant such as car exhaust, coal plant emissions, and industrial effluent. Not easy, I know, but even keeping windows closed (or open) can help. Regular airing of your albums will also help to preserve them.

Avoid eating or drinking around your stamps, too. Grease spots and pop stains are not only unsightly, they also attract insects that can destroy an album in a surprisingly short time. Spilled coffee can also turn those expensive mint unhinged

stamps into landfill in only a few seconds of inattention. Better to keep the food and drink in the kitchen.

STORING YOUR COLLECTION

The enemy of stored collections is water in the atmosphere - either too much or too little. Depending on the kind of climate you live in, you may need to either increase or decrease humidity in the room where you store your collection. Generally homes in temperate climates that use central heating provide good conditions for storing stamps. If you are comfortable, your stamps probably are too. It may be worth investing in air conditioning, a humidifier, or a de-humidifier if your budget warrants to maintain a suitable environment in your home. Be especially careful if you are storing your stamps in a basement or shed, or in an attic. If there is any hint of dampness, or if the temperature is high, move your collection to another space. Make sure your family is aware of this, too; I would guess more collections have been destroyed by inappropriate storage than by any other cause.

Take the time to go through your albums and boxes once every few months even if you are not currently using them. This allows the stamps to air, and gives you the chance to inspect them for any problems that may be developing.

FIRST AID

The following "recipes" are supplied for use in arresting or reversing some common problems that may arise with stamps or covers in your collection. NOTE WELL: If you are not willing to lose the stamp or cover, DONT EXPERIMENT WITH IT! IF WHAT YOU HAVE IS PRECIOUS OR VALUABLE, PLEASE LOOK INTO PROFESSIONAL CONSERVATION. I would tend to try and preserve only those covers and philatelic items that will die an imminent death anyway. The German "Ostropa" sheet cited above is a case in point; the gum is so acidic on these that if they haven't rotted away already, they are darn close.

These recipes are all water based and non-toxic, but please observe some basic precautions. If you have the faintest doubt that anything on the cover or stamp may run in aqueous solutions (water), leave them alone! Ink can be tricky, as can cancellations. Watch also for wax seals and other attachments, as these too can come loose with handling combined with just a little moisture. When mixing and handling solutions, don't use kitchen utensils, as they may have traces of food or grease on them - invest in a few new, clean, spoons, containers and sprayers. Use distilled water; tap water may contain minerals or salts that will react with your cover or stamp. Use fresh solutions, too, as old solutions may not work (especially hydrogen peroxide). Spray solutions outdoors, or at least in a well ventilated area, and don't breath the spray in. And last, but very important - make sure your cover or stamp is dry before storing.

Checking paper for Acidity

Determining the acidity of paper can be roughly tested by us-



This 33¢ stamp recognizing the year 2000 will be issued Dec. 27. The stamp is a surprise addition to the 1999 U.S. stamp program.

In a surprise Dec. 10 announcement, the United States Postal Service declared that it will slip one last 33¢ stamp into its 1999 stamp program.

The self-adhesive Year 2000 stamp will be released nationwide Dec. 27 in Washington, D.C., just in time for some folks to get it on their mail in the waning days of 1999.

The new stamp was not part of previously published 1999 stamp program listings.

According to Cathy Yarosky of the Postal Service's community relations office, no official first-day ceremony is planned.

Postal Service technical details sent to *Linn's* Dec. 10 indicate that the new stamp will be sold in flat panes of 20.

Shown nearby is an image of the Year 2000 stamp reproduced from a Postal Service publicity transparency.

The design is based on original artwork by American illustrator J.C. Leyendecker that first appeared on the cover of the Jan. 2, 1937, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*.

According to *Saturday Evening Post* archivist Steve Pettinga, the archival rights to this cover are held by Curtis Publishing based in Indianapolis, Ind.

Are older non-denominated stamps still valid for postage?

Yes, they are. Below is a list of non-denominated postage stamps and their values:

Series A - 15¢

Series B - 18¢

Series C - 20¢

Series D - 22¢

Series E - 25¢

Series F - 29¢ F rate make-up stamp - 4¢

Series G - 32¢ G rate make-up stamp - 3¢

Series G Postcard - 20¢ (the current postcard rate)

Series H - 33¢ H rate make-up stamp - 1¢



The above cancel will be available for thirty days at the Jefferson Rd. main post office.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 13, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

WHITE HOUSE -- Today I have signed into law S. 335, which contains the Deceptive Mail Prevention and Enforcement Act. Too often, consumers -- especially the elderly -- either understand sweepstakes mailings to mean that they have won large prizes or else spend their savings on unwanted merchandise and publications in the hope of increasing their chances of winning. Too often, mailing and sweepstakes practices seem designed to mislead. This legislation will protect Americans against those who use sweepstakes and mailings to deceive and exploit the unwary. It will establish standards for sweepstakes mailings, skill contests, and facsimile checks; restrict "government look-alike" documents; and allow individuals to have their names and addresses removed from sweepstakes mailing lists if they choose. Disclosures will make clear that no purchase is necessary to enter a sweepstakes and that a purchase will not improve a consumer's chances of winning a prize. The legislation also creates strong financial penalties for companies that do not disclose all terms and conditions of a contest. Individuals will be able to request a stop to certain mailings that come to their homes, and companies will face liability if they do not honor these requests. The United States Postal Service will have enhanced authority to investigate and stop deceptive mailings, and companies will face greater penalties for failing to comply with a Postal Service "stop order."

I am proud to sign S. 335 into law today to establish a "right to know" for sweepstakes mailing recipients and protect Americans against misleading mailing and sweepstakes practices.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON



Niuafou Island

"Tin Can Island"

On the outskirts of the Tongan Group, nearly 400 miles from Tongatapu, Niuafou is about 3½ miles long by 3 miles wide. It is of volcanic origin and has a long record of serious eruptions, in which parts of the island were devastated.

Following a violent eruption during September, 1946, the 1,330 inhabitants were removed and eventually resettled at Eua Island, south of Tongatapu. Until September, 1950, only a few workers lived on the island, and from Nakalofo, only one vessel called there. After 12 years' absence, over 200 former inhabitants have returned and started rebuilding their homes and villages.

From the air, Niuafou resembles a large donut in shape, since the crater is a large lake, about 2½ miles across, which lies in the crater of the volcano. The lake contains islets which themselves have craters. Hot springs are found in various parts of the lake. The water is brackish and unfit for drinking purposes.

There is no good anchorage at Niuafou as the bottom is rocky and irregular and slopes down steeply into deep water. At one time passing steamers would seal inward mail for the island in 40-lb. biscuit tins which were thrown overboard to be towed ashore by waiting native "postmen." From this unique method of mail delivery the island became known as "Tin Can Island."

L. E. MONTEREY - - - - - *[Signature]*

Come to the January 13th
meeting and learn all about
the Tonga Tin Can Mail

ing bromcresol green, an indicator dye. Touched to the paper, the dye remains green if the paper is neutral, yellow if acidic, and blue if alkaline. This dye is in bottles or felt tipped pens through scientific or archival supply houses. Be careful, as this will stain.

Deacidification of Paper

The chemicals used in these methods are relatively harmless (they are closely related to baking soda, and the active ingredients in proprietary antacids!) but as in anything be careful with the solutions, test them on something you don't want first, and make sure you follow the recipe. I imagine that a pharmacist or archival supply house might be able to give you a supplier for these chemicals. If you can't find these chemicals, I see no reason why plain old baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) would not be a good substitute.

Recipe 1 - Make up a 0.12 percent solution of calcium bicarbonate in distilled water. Soak the sheet in the solution for half an hour, then remove, blot off excess solution, and dry between pressing boards. This process neutralizes the acid content and leaves an alkaline residue as a buffer against further contamination.

Recipe 2 - Make up a 10 g per litre solution of magnesium bicarbonate and use an atomizer bottle (spray bottle) to spray a fine mist of solution onto the paper. Do this in open air or a well-ventilated area. This method is preferred for fragile items that may not take much handling.

Reversing "Oxidation" on Stamps

A gentle bath in a two to three percent hydrogen peroxide solution will restore the colour in stamps that have lead based inks that have darkened due to exposure to trace amounts of acid. If the colour does not change after a half an hour or so, "oxidation" is not the culprit. This treatment works for restoring colour to the 3c small Queens of Canada. By a different chemical mechanism it will also restore the colour of the "muddy waters" variety of the Canadian 1898 Map Stamp. Research the stamp pigment before using hydrogen peroxide, as vegetable based dyes used in later years may be irreversibly bleached by this treatment.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

They may be "just stamps", but even the most basic collection is worth handling properly. I hope these tips and recipes help you keep your collection in good condition. Remember, years from now a novice collector will appreciate a well preserved copy of even a common stamp. Good handling and storage techniques now will ensure a supply of quality stamps for the future.

RS STAMP SHOW

SUNDAY, February 13, 2000 10am-4pm

Eagles Club

1200 Buffalo Rd. Rt.33, Rochester NY 14624

Door Prizes Free Parking 19 Dealers

RPA Monthly Programs

Jan. 13th "Tonga Tin Can Mail" APS slide program

Jan. 27th "The Soviet Voskhod Space Program in Philately" slideshow

Feb. 10th "The Mails of the Graf Zeppelin To and From Palestine" slideshow

Feb. 24th "The French Third Republic, Part II: Postal Service in War and Revolution" slideshow

Mar. 9th "Stamp Technology Basics" slideshow

March 16 Set up for ROPEX at Diplomat Party House

March 17-19

ROPEX 2000 National Stamp Show

Mar. 23rd "Stamps of the Steamship Companies: West Indies, Central & South America"

Tonga Tin Can Mail by Janet Klug

Transportation of mail between the Pacific island of Tonga and passing ships began in the late 1800s, not as a publicity stunt, but as a necessity, due to the island's lack of safe harbor for ships. Later, with the entrepreneurial spirits of Messrs. Quensell and Ramsay reigning, many and varied cacheted covers were created, to the delight of today's cover collectors.

This program explains and illustrates the history of the island, how and why Tin Can Mail service began, and changes in the system that developed through the years (due to such things as volcanic eruptions and shark attacks) until 1983, when air mail made Tin Can Mail obsolete. **Viewing Jan. 13th.**

The Soviet Voskhod Space Program in Philately, by Peter Pesavento

One element of the "space race" between the former Soviet Union and the United States was a small manned Russian space project call *Voskhod*. In the mid-60s, at the height of the race, its two missions achieved several spectacular first, including the first multi-man flight and the first walk in space. The stories behind these flights, however, are even more interesting. Former prison-camp inmates directed the program, fighting impossible deadlines and forced to improvise equipment without regard to even basic safety (e.g., the three-man crew went into space in a capsule designed for one, and without space suits).

This program reviews that project's philatelic commemorations and also tells an amazing story of human effort. **View this program Jan. 27th.**

ROPEX 2000 Schedule of special events

Friday, March 17

- 10 AM.....Welcome and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
- 10:30 AM....Meet the Rochester Postmaster & USPS Officials Presentation
- 1 PM.....Exhibitors Luncheon (Lower Level- Dutch Treat)
- 3 PM.....ART Cover Exchange General Meeting

Saturday, March 18

- 10 AM.....Fakes, Forgeries, and Counterfeits Study Group Meeting
- 12 Noon.....Empire State Postal History Meeting
- 12 Noon.....Chapter 53 Central New York First Day Cover Society Luncheon
(Dutch Treat - off site)
- 1 PM.....Mobile Post Office Society Meeting
- 1:30 PM.....Chapter 53 Business Meeting (off site)
- 2 PM.....American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors' Seminar
presented by Ann Triggle
- 3 PM.....Judges Critique
- 6 PM.....Pre-Banquet Cocktails (Diplomat Banquet Center)
- 6:30 PM.....ROPEX 2000 Awards Banquet (Diplomat Banquet Center)

Sunday, March 19

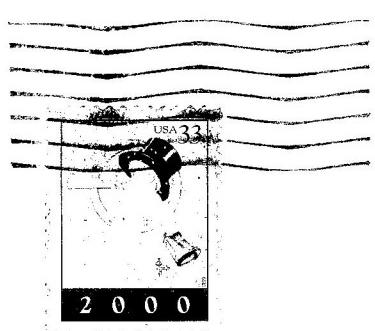
- 10:00ish.....The Marmalades "Show & Tell"
- 1 PM.....NY Philatelic Bandits Hootenanny & Pizza Party/Stamp Swap
- 4 PM.....Show closes

At the Diplomat Party House, Lyell Ave. Rochester, New York 14606

Hinges & Tongs

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